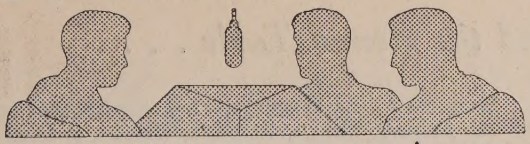
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



# ROUND TABLE

# Are We Well Informed?

*A Radio Discussion by*

* WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE
* LEO ROSTEN
* MAYNARD KRUEGER

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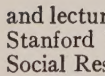
January 17, 1943

# *Around the Round Table . . . .*

William Allen White, distinguished author and editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, Emporia, Kansas, is a native Kansan and received his college education at the University of Kansas. Since 1895 he has been the distinguished editor of the *Gazette*, where he has won fame for such editorials as "Mary White," "To an Anxious Friend," and "What's the Matter with Kansas?" Besides his newspaper career, Mr. White has been very active in national affairs. He is a prominent liberal, progressive Republican and was a member of the famous Bull Moose revolt. He has taken an active part in the cause of internationalism as a leader of the League of Nations Association and, in 1940, as founder and chairman of the Committee To Defend America by Aiding the Allies. He is a regular contributor to magazines and newspapers and the author of many books, among which are: *The Real Issue* (1896); *The Court of Boyville* (1899); *In Our Town* (1906); *A Certain Rich Man* (1909); *In the Heart of a Fool* (1918); *The Martial Adventures of Henry and Me* (1918); *Life of Woodrow Wilson* (1924); *Masks in a Pageant* (1928); *A Puritan in Babylon* (1938); and *The Changing West* (1939).



Leo Rosten, deputy director of the Office of War Information, received both his undergraduate training and his Ph.D. degree at the University of Chicago. Mr. Rosten has taught and lectured at a number of colleges, including the University of Chicago, Stanford University, the University of California, the New School for Social Research, and New York University. He was director of the Carnegie Corporation's Motion Picture Research Project and studied Hollywood, the movie colony, and movie-makers under a Rockefeller Foundation grant. In 1936 he served on the research staff of the President's Committee on Administrative Management and in 1941 was a consultant to the National Defense Advisory Commission and the Office of Emergency Management. He is a regular magazine contributor and the author of *The Education of H*y*m*a*n K*a*p*l*a*n* (1937); *The Washington Correspondents* (1937); *Dateline: Europe* (1939); *The Strangest Places* (1939); *Adventure in Washington* (1939); *Hollywood: The Movie Colony, and the Movie Makers* (1941).

Maynard C. Krueger, now assistant professor of economics at the University of Chicago, studied both history and international politics before specializing in economics. He completed his undergraduate education at the University of Missouri in 1926. After receiving his A.M. from that institution in 1927, he joined the staff of Albion College as an instructor in history. He spent three years in Europe studying at the universities of Paris, Berlin, and Geneva. From 1928 until he joined the faculty of the University of Chicago in 1932 he taught in the School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to his scholarly activity, politics is a major interest. In 1940 he ran as vice-presidential candidate for the Socialist party and is now national chairman of the Socialist party.

# ARE WE WELL INFORMED?

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MR. KRUEGER: Are we well informed? Mr. Rosten, a good many people in this country think that important news is being witheld from the people and that a great deal of the rest of the news is being sugar-coated.

MR. ROSTEN: I think that that's a good old American custom. I think that the American public is better informed about this war in all of its aspects than any public in the world.

MR. WHITE: How can a man be well informed about a war that extends around the globe, like a belt? He'd have to read every day an *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on the war to be even fairly well informed about the war.

MR. KRUEGER: But by being well informed I don't mean (and I don't think you mean either) that a man should know every fact. You remember the distinction that you were making in a recent magazine article between knowing all the facts and knowing the truth.[1]

MR. WHITE: Yes. I was a reporter at the Versailles Conference, and I printed what I thought were the facts. I had access to all the facts. Yet, I could not tell the truth because I had not the historical perspective or the gift of prophecy. I couldn't see what had been and what was coming.

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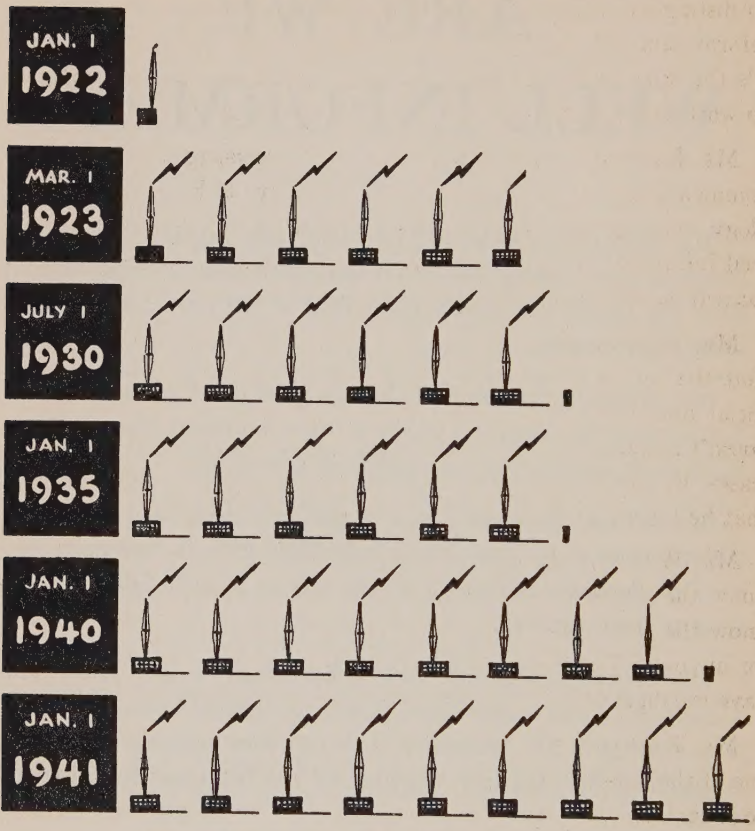
[1] See William Allen White, "Editors Live and Learn," *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1942.

# RADIO*

## Number of Licensed Stations in the United States




EACH COMPLETE SYMBOL EQUALS 100 STATIONS

*Source:* Federal Communications Commission.

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MR. ROSTEN: I think that it's encouraging to hear William Allen White admit that, because one of the problems we do face is to distinguish between information and the understanding of that information. The government can give out the information, but it's the duty of the press and the radio and the people themselves to work at understanding the information and the war.

MR. KRUEGER: That means, then, that a newspaperman, a radio commentator, and the ordinary citizen all have to know some sociology, some economics, some political science. They've got to be well informed on the way a society operates, not simply well informed on what ship was sunk yesterday.

MR. ROSTEN: You can put it that way, Mr. Krueger. I think that the war is so complex—it operates on the economic and the social and the political and the psychological fronts—that one doesn't understand it unless, instead of merely a series of press releases, he can interpret the facts or have the facts interpreted so that he knows what the war is about and how it's going.

MR. WHITE: Remember that the Biblical aphorism is "Ye shall know the Truth," not just hear the truth or read the truth, but know the truth, which is another matter and a most difficult one for anyone. The test of our democracy is going to be whether we have intelligence even now to know the truth when we get the facts.

MR. KRUEGER: On this military-secrets business, I think that one of the reasons people are not as well informed as they ought to be is that military men are inclined to interpret military secrets in such a way as to cover up their mistakes and protect themselves against criticism.

MR. ROSTEN: Yes, I think that the problem of a military secret is always with us. The role that the civilian plays in determining what is a military secret is very important.

It happens that in the Office of War Information, for example, in Washington today, Mr. Elmer Davis and representatives of OWI meet each day with representatives of the War and Navy depart-

ments to discuss that kind of news which might or might not be a military secret, and it also happens that the civilian arm and the public is being represented very energetically on the determination of military information.

MR. WHITE: All right! I believe that we are getting, as I say, a fairly good digest of the facts and the truth. I'm willing to accept now the say-so of the military organization. I'm not ready to squawk —not yet!

MR. KRUEGER: When Elmer Davis, though, of the Office of War Information gets into an argument with some generals or admirals about what is and what is not a military secret, who is it wins the argument, Mr. Rosten?

MR. ROSTEN: I don't know how to answer that. I haven't been at the tables of peace or at war, in the hypothetical situation, but I would say this: Most of the public will agree with William Allen White that one can better run the risk of holding a little military news back rather than run the risk of imperiling our actual military security. I think that Mr. Davis' statement on that is very clear when he said that the people must make up their minds whether they want to damage their own security by telling the enemy what he doesn't know, or whether they're willing to trust their government to tell them as much as it can, as soon as it can.[2]

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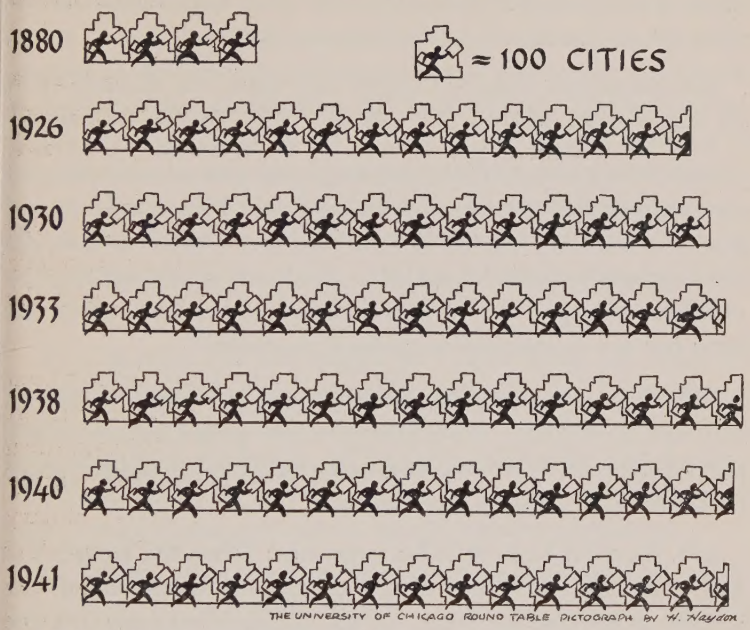
[2] Elmer Davis said in part: ". . . . A free people has a right to know just as much as possible about the progress of a war it is fighting. The only limitation on that right is that, in giving information to our own people, we should endanger our prospect of victory. No good citizen would disagree with that in principle; but, when it comes to applying the principle, there are disagreements, some of which can be removed by a wider understanding. . . . . The basic principle . . . . has been that the American people is entitled to full information—*except* information which is not known to the enemy; and which, if it were known to the enemy, would endanger American lives, American ships, or the success of American military operations. . . . . We cannot promise you that we shall always give you the whole truth immediately; we are not going to promise that we will announce the sinking of every American ship that is sunk, just as soon as it is sunk. We are going to do that in so far as we can, but we shall not do it if it would help the enemy. We know that the American people are courageous

## DAILY NEWSPAPER CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES*




* Federal Communications Commission.

MR. KRUEGER: That "trust the government business" I don't like so well. We hear too much of that from the totalitarian countries, and there's enough danger of that without it's being emphasized any more. What I'd like to see is more civilian participation in the determination of what is and what is not a military secret.

MR. ROSTEN: It isn't only a matter of trust. In the totalitarian countries one trusts and does no more, and even then he doesn't

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enough to stand bad news. We believe that the American people are also intelligent enough not to want news that would imperil the lives of American soldiers and sailors, or diminish our prospects of victory" (excerpts from an address on "War Information and Military Security" [*United States News*, December 11, 1942]).

know. We have the right to criticize, and, to come back to the point I raised a moment ago, the press and the radio and the people themselves can and should continue to exert their influence to get the news out, so that it is clear and understandable to them.

MR. KRUEGER: There are several very important questions that are being raised now on this subject, "Are We Well Informed?"

ANNOUNCER: *Many of the* ROUND TABLE *listeners write that they are concerned about the lack of public understanding on inflation and price control. They ask, "Why doesn't the government drive home the real dangers of inflation? Isn't it true that we are not well informed on such home-front problems? Shouldn't the government tell the press and radio just how to explain these things to the public?"*

MR. KRUEGER: On that home-front question it seems to me that this is an illustration: Thirty per cent of the people out around my part of the country do not know why gas is being rationed right now. Isn't that a pretty sad situation?

MR. ROSTEN: Look at it for a moment: When the Baruch Report came out, there was almost unanimous agreement on the validity of the position taken, on the validity of the facts, on the absolute need for gas rationing. But what happens? When gas rationing strikes home, when you can't drive your car, when you can't go to the movies, when you can't meet your friends, you don't like it. The American people don't like what happens as a result of rationing. What they're objecting to, I think, is not the information about rationing but rationing itself. Mr. White, how do you feel about that?

MR. WHITE: Out our way we have lots of oil, but we are taking rationing with considerable complacency. We're doing it. But, nevertheless, a lot of people don't realize that we're rationing gas in order to save rubber.

It comes down, after all, to a test of the intelligence of democracy. Are we going to win this war as a democracy—understanding

and interpreting—or are we going to have to go into a totalitarian way?

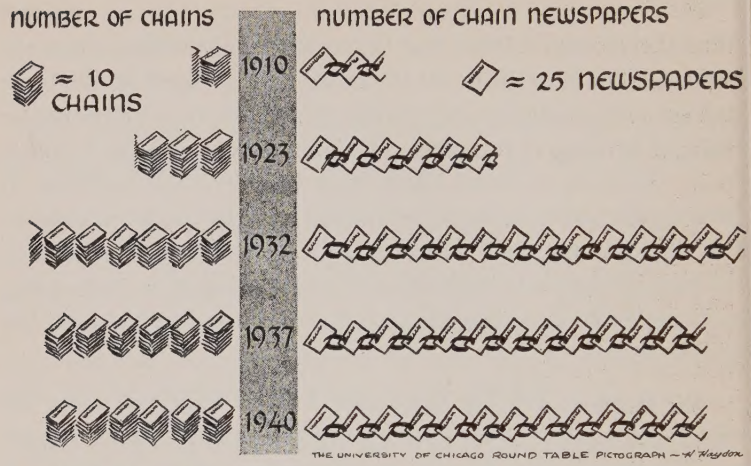
MR. KRUEGER: I think that there are literally millions of people in the United States who are not at all well informed on the basic problem of tax policy and of inflation, which I think is far more basic than the problem of rationing. Of those millions who don't understand, there are an awful lot of them in pretty high positions in Washington. At least from government agencies in recent months I don't think that we have had any decent job done on explaining the basic arithmetic of inflation. It is happening; inflation is going on; and the basic arithmetic of it has not been explained to the people.

MR. ROSTEN: I'm not quite sure I know what you mean by "basic arithmetic." I am a member of the public. I know that we ought to buy bonds. I know that there is a ceiling on prices. I know that taxes are higher and higher. I know that there is a Victory Tax, and so on, and so on. I know that all these things are part of the government's attack on the problem of inflation.

MR. KRUEGER: Let me tell you what I mean by the basic arithmetic of it. If you're going to have a total budget of one hundred and nine billion dollars and if you have a tax bill that brings in twenty-five billion a year, that leaves a difference of eighty-four billion dollars. If the Treasury succeeds in selling a billion dollars a month of bonds to the general public—twelve billion a year—that still leaves a gap of seventy-two billion dollars. I'd like to see somebody lay that problem squarely out before the public and then draw the conclusion. Either we're going to have a smaller military program or a far larger tax bill or we're going to have inflation.

MR. ROSTEN: Mr. Krueger, you're criticizing not the information policy there but the actual techniques and methods being used to avoid inflation. The Office of War Information is an office of war information; it's not an office of economic policy.

MR. WHITE: I understand the Office of War Information to be




* All of these are high-circulation papers (*Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January, 1942).

the piano and the pianist who plays a score that is set down by the Administration. They have to accept the score. My judgment and advice in this case is: Don't shoot the pianist; he's doing his best.

MR. KRUEGER: I think that that's quite reasonable. The piano-player can't play any better music than he's got, and the Office of War Information can't explain any better policy than the government is following. But I would like to see somebody ease off on shouting about that billion dollars a month of bonds that are being sold to the people and start shouting about the seventy-two billions or so that are likely to be sold to the banks before the next year is over.

MR. ROSTEN: O.K., let's follow that very swell analogy of White's. The composers of the music often don't agree. I remember that a thousand distinguished economists signed a petition to President Hoover, objecting strenuously to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff.

MR. KRUEGER: They were right about it, too.

MR. ROSTEN: I think that they were, too. It would seem to me that the reponsibility of criticizing the measures being taken to fight inflation is in the hands of the experts and the economists, and the economists can certainly speak up freely and criticize. At that point it is not an information problem but a problem in economic policy.

MR. KRUEGER: But the trouble there is—this doesn't apply to our friend, William Allen White—that so many newspaper editors and so many economists in universities throughout the country think that they are doing a disservice in pointing out any inadequacies in government policy. I think that that is the greatest of public service.

MR. ROSTEN: That's a "wow."

MR. WHITE: Amid all this confusion, amid this conflict of opinion, it seems to me that here is one place where the White House should take leadership. It seems to me that the President should outline to the American people exactly what he's going to do with that seventy-two-billion gap. I think that he should come out on the front porch of the White House and tell the world what his policy is, how we can help, and what our duty is as citizens in sustaining the government in this terrible danger that threatens us.

MR. ROSTEN: Let's not forget that it isn't the President alone who makes, determines, and executes the policy of the United States government on, say, inflation. After all, the bills which the Administration has proposed, the appropriations which it has asked for, the measures which it has proposed, have gone to Congress. Even those measures which you, Mr. Krueger, feel are very timid and very inadequate have been cut down by the Congress.

MR. KRUEGER: That's true. Therefore, I think that maybe the release to the public from the Office of War Information ought to run something like this: The Administration has never proposed

to Congress a tax bill that was even halfway big enough to begin to handle the problem, and Congress has gone ahead and cut it down below that. What would the public say if they got that kind of information? I think that they'd probably put the heat on in the right place.

MR. ROSTEN: But they might say that the Office of War Information is exceeding its function and that it doesn't have any right to step in and create a controversy between Congress and the Administration.

MR. KRUEGER: Let me throw another problem before you. I think that the newspapers, in the field of which you are one of the editors, Mr. White, . . . .

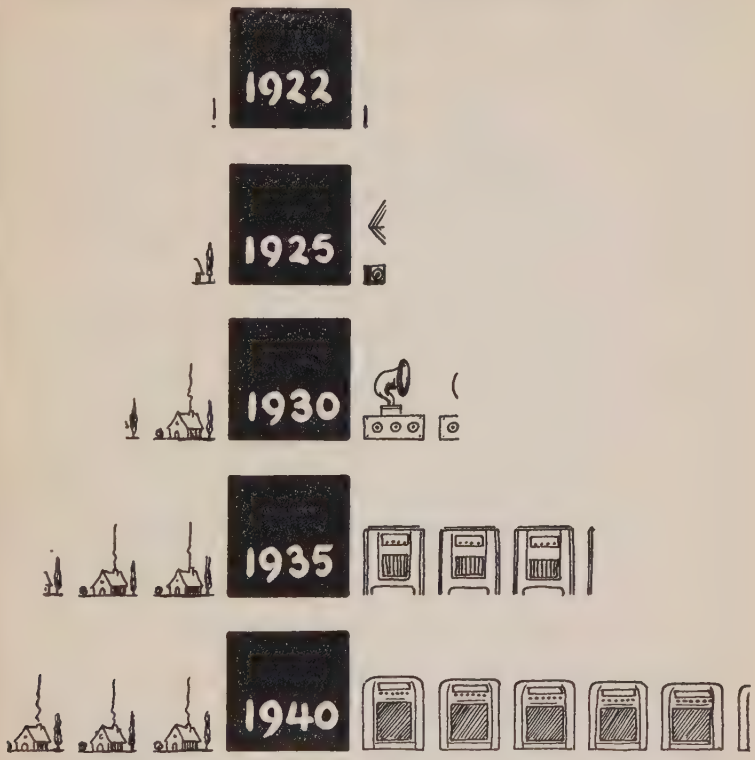
MR. WHITE: And defenders . . . .

MR. KRUEGER: . . . . the editors and the radio people and the movie people are tackling this morale problem entirely too directly. The radio shouts at the people, preaches to them all the time. The newspapers run sensational headlines that bury the facts. How can people expect to be well informed under those circumstances?

MR. WHITE: The average newspaperman going to his job of making up his paper has two things which emphasize what he thinks is the news: First, position—top right-hand column on the first page; second, selection, from the vast array of news items that are before him. In making this selection, in making this emphasis of position, he doesn't consider morale. He's not interested in beating drums and blowing trumpets. He's interested in making a paper that will sell. It may be sordid, but, after all, he is in the business of publishing a newspaper for readers who want to read.

MR. ROSTEN: I agree with you, Mr. White. I think that it comes down to the question of the premium that the press places on conflict, on fights—on a cat-and-dog fight. One always gets news when he gets conflict. One doesn't get news when there is agreement. As a result, minor conflicts—sideline disagreements—are often played

## RADIO IN AMERICA*




*Reprinted from University of Chicago ROUND TABLE *Radio in Wartime* (No. 218).

up as if they represent a tremendous dissension in Washington, which usually is just not true.

MR. KRUEGER: That sounds to me, then, as if newspapers and radio stations that were operating for a profit, making money out of circulation and advertising, and so on, aren't very well set up to do a good job of informing the public. It seems that if you ask them

to inform the public instead of watching their own circulation interests, you're rubbing the cat the wrong way, but maybe the cat ought to be turned around.

ANNOUNCER: *A second area of concern to many* ROUND TABLE *listeners is that of the issues of the war. For example, we have many letters asking: "Why aren't we told more about the contributions to the war effort by our Allies? Why aren't we told more about the nature of fascism instead of so much detail about the brutality of our enemies? Why aren't we told about the government's plans and blueprints for the post-war world?"*

MR. KRUEGER: The people who asked those questions are right up my alley. I think that those are the important questions and that there's far too much emphasis on this brutalitarian business and not enough on what totalitarianism really is.

MR. ROSTEN: One reason for that, I think, is curious. This war, in my opinion (and I think in the opinion of many other people), represents a plot, if you want to put it melodramatically, on the part of Japan and Germany against us and against the world—a plot which has been worked out for ten years in one case and twelve years in another, in an enormously careful detail.

MR. KRUEGER: You're exempting Italy, the way a lot of government spokesmen are these days.

MR. ROSTEN: For the moment. We can complicate the issue if you want later. But if you try to communicate this idea to the public, and it has been communicated, it's hard for people to believe the monstrosity of this plot and the direct threat to them all through these years.

MR. WHITE: Give me a minute, young men. It seems to me that this war was not started by Hitler, not even by Mussolini, not even by the Japs. It's the old, old struggle between justice and power.

MR. KRUEGER: And what do you mean by "power"?

Mr. White: I mean that revolutionary change that began to come into the world with the invention of steam engines—steam, which made things which once were made by hand—and with the capital that was necessary to buy and operate the machines. Steam has made the great problem of power that has increased technologically until today we have the whole world in a conflict between power and justice.

Mr. Rosten: That may be true, looking at it that way. One might go even further back. But think of your earlier statement about the encyclopedic knowledge necessary. We are faced with a war that's right here. The issues of that war, the impact of that war, creates a full-time job in explaining and presenting, and so on. If we try to give the explanation that you give, we would be accused (and maybe legitimately) of forgetting about this war and becoming historians rather than information people.

Mr. Krueger: If you don't pay any attention to the kind of question Mr. White was just raising, then you're going to be guilty of giving all your attention to an immediate military conflict and going ahead into a post-war situation where you'll just have another and a larger war. Nobody likes that either.

Mr. Rosten: I don't think that you can expect information in itself—I'm not talking about an information agency or any person, but information as such—to usurp the role of diplomacy, to usurp the role of post-war planning, to take over the job that the State Department and the President and the people, in the final analysis, have to assume.

Mr. White: Again I want to say that the test of this war will be not with guns and tanks and planes but with the people primarily —we may say the "arsenal of democracy," the people who make those guns and tanks and planes. If they don't understand why they're making them, if they don't understand this struggle—this age-old struggle between justice and power—we're liable to lose the

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* *Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, 1942.*

war, even though we have a military victory, for in the end we shall let some kind of power, military power, dominate the world.

MR. ROSTEN: You remember one of the questions that was shot at us, as having come from a ROUND TABLE listener, was: "Why aren't we told these things? For example, why aren't we told more about the contributions of our Allies?"

If one picks up any newspaper, he will see stories of what England is doing in North Africa; what Russia is doing on the German front; and what China is doing to Japan. Those are certainly stories which give information about what our Allies are doing.

MR. KRUEGER: On that point, bringing information about what the Allies are doing or what is going on in the enemy countries, I

don't think that the information agencies have done so badly. But with regard to this whole matter of post-war plans—and, after all, a war is fought to restore peace, and unless the peace is some good the war is no good, even if you win it hands down—on that matter, people do not know.

Are we, for example, fighting for the restoration of the Dutch colonies to Queen Wilhelmina? Or for the maintenance of the British control of Malaysia and of Hong Kong? Are we fighting for the maintenance of the French Empire in North Africa?

MR. ROSTEN: Let me use a very crude analogy. If you're in a fight with a gang that has attacked you, your first job is to lick them. It is true that while you're fighting it might be helpful to say, "After I lick them, I'm going to teach them not to do this again," but before you can devote your energies to that you've got to meet the issue at hand; you've got to win and fight the war so that you can decide the really important issue which stems from the questions you mention. This war is really a war to determine who is going to decide, we or they.

MR. WHITE: Decide what?

MR. ROSTEN: Decide anything—decide the peace, decide the distribution of materials over the world, decide the status of the peoples of the world. But, unless we win, any questions you raise are completely irrelevant.

MR. KRUEGER: I can answer that question—who is going to decide, we or they? Neither we nor they are going to decide that question. It's going to be everybody throughout the whole world that's going to decide that. If the lesson that William Allen White learned at the Versailles Conference is to be forgotten now, then the whole thing is fairly hopeless.

MR. ROSTEN: Mr. Krueger, I'm surprised to hear you say that—it's either we or they. If the Nazis win, it's not we; it's they. If we win, it's we and not they.

MR. KRUEGER: Apparently, if you have a hands-down military

victory, then you're saying that the victorious powers are going to organize the world afterward.

MR. ROSTEN: I'm not necessarily saying that. I don't mean that, and I don't think that we ought to get into the problem of post-war planning—but we haven't got a chance unless we win.

ANNOUNCER: *A third group of questions—questions most frequently asked by* ROUND TABLE *listeners—are these: "Why haven't we been told more about the political situation in North Africa, about the dealings with Darlan and other French officials? Is it true that information about American opinion on India is not permitted to be sent abroad? Isn't political censorship a danger both to the prosecution of the war and to the writing of a sound peace?"*

MR. KRUEGER: Mr. White, aren't you one of the people who were squawking about political censorship on the North African business?

MR. WHITE: Yes. I didn't like the way Willkie was censored when he was about to make a speech criticizing Darlan, and when the President himself the next day said exactly what Willkie wanted to say. I didn't like the way Willkie was supposed to have been censored when he tried to tell England something of American opinion about India. What about that?[3]

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[3] Wendell Willkie, in an article written for the *London Evening Standard*, December 7, 1942, attacked "international censorship" and charged that American censorship had prevented him from discussing Admiral Jean François Darlan's position in North Africa.

Mr. Willkie charged that censorship of this type was being used to cover up official mistakes. He said that it also prevented free discussion of post-war purposes and said that, if agreement on a peace program were not reached "while we fight, we will inevitably fall apart when the fighting is over."

"The only hope of avoiding such a tragedy lies in free public and private discussion of its dangers," Mr. Willkie said. "If the United States again withdraws within itself after this war, there can be no peace or economic security in this world—at least under a democratic form of government."

Wendell Willkie, speaking in the *New York Herald Tribune* Forum, November 16, 1942, asked if we should be quiet when we see "our State Department's long appeasement of Vichy."

MR. KRUEGER: Of course, I don't think Willkie is the great white hope of the country, but that's not what we are discussing now. I think that he has a right to speak. The important thing is that the people have a right to hear what a man has to say that's critical of that policy.

I think that the whole North African business, from the political standpoint, was a betrayal of the democratic idea there, and the more complaint there is about it from the public—about not getting information—the better off we're going to be.

MR. ROSTEN: Mr. Krueger, I remember the President very dramatically and very forcefully saying that Darlan was a temporary political expedient. That seemed to me to be pretty "cold turkey."

I think, secondly, that it's necessary to point out that we are sufficiently well informed to know what further facts we want. The public is asking for further facts because it knows a great deal.

MR. KRUEGER: Raymond Clapper, in a recent column, pretty clearly charges the State Department with having deliberately suppressed the real political news out of North Africa.[4]

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"I tell you we cannot fight this war in silence, whatever our experts say, because if we fight in silence, these same experts will, in the end, even winning the war, win nothing but blood and ashes.

"Thus, in order to win a real victory, we must encourage the utmost amount of discussion among ourselves and with our Allies. Russia and China have each already suffered greater losses in this war than all the rest of us put together. Those two enormous nations are also our Allies, and, consequently, when we talk about reaching agreement among Allied peoples, we must mean the Russian people and the Chinese people as well as British people and American people."

Specifically, he wanted to know, he said, what the United Nations proposed to do about the peoples of the British and Dutch possessions of the Malay Peninsula and the islands of the Southwest Pacific—"areas containing, among other things, the principal sources of rubber supply in the world."

Shortly before Willkie was to make his address, which was broadcast, the prepared text was revised, presumably because of the political situation in North Africa.

[4] In his column, January 17, 1943, on "Need Allied Council," Raymond Clapper wrote: "The unfortunate differences between London and Washington over political policies in North Africa should serve as a jolting warning that it is dangerous to delay creation of a United Nations council."

Mr. White: I should like to hear what, for instance, Roosevelt said to Churchill about India; and, incidentally, if you ask me, I'd like to know what Churchill said to Roosevelt about the antilynching bill and the poll-tax bill.

Mr. Krueger: Mr. White, you seem to take this business of the United Nations seriously. If they're going to be united nations, you think that the public might be let in on a little of the cross-fire of political discussion that goes on between governments.

Mr. White: If they are united nations of the united peoples.

Mr. Rosten: I think that it is necessary to point out that the fact that we are not getting the kind of information that Mr. Krueger and Mr. White want on the United Nations does not mean that there is any blueprint already in effect, or any knowledge of the post-war world already in effect, which is not being given to the people. It may well be that these problems have to be worked out later in the war or after the war; but it's wrong to assume that there is information which is not being given.

Mr. Krueger: But it is true, isn't it, that the nature of the post-war world is going to be determined largely by what happens during the war—more so than by any peace conference that's going to be held? Therefore, the kind of a deal that was made in North Africa is to be taken as a clue to what the government is willing to do politically in compromising with fascism in order to win what will be called a military victory. Doesn't that worry you, Mr. White?

Mr. White: Yes. It seems to me that we must at once, or soon, give the general tendency and direction of where we're going—not in detail, not in the matter of blueprints, but even more than we are now. It seems to me that that is up to the President. I don't think that the President takes the people sufficiently into his confidence. I know the tremendous job that is in his hands in running a war, but I know, on the other hand, the tremendous need to bring this American people into an understanding of the war.

MR. ROSTEN: It might be wise to remind ourselves that if all the facts were known about every word uttered by the President, or every member of Congress, or any official in Washington, that might still not add up to a comprehensible or reassuring picture. The war is complicated, and the aspects of the war are complicated. They can't be packaged in satisfactory terms at all times.

MR. WHITE: Again I want to say that the President should come out on the front porch of the nation to tell the people, for instance, about inflation, and what it means, and, like Elijah, say: "Unless you take care of this inflation, the bears will come down from the mountains and eat you up."

MR. ROSTEN: You're speaking for the bears. I'd like to point out that the President can't possibly devote the time, nor may it be wise from many other points of view, to talk to the people about every aspect or every problem that arises. That is, he does have to keep his eye on the ball, on the main stream, on the ultimate issues, on the over-all strategy on where we are going and how we are doing.

MR. KRUEGER: There's some difference of opinion between us here on how to handle these matters. You, Mr. Rosten, seem to think that we're doing very well on the whole military-secret business; I think civilians don't have anywhere near enough to say about it; and Mr. White isn't ready to squawk about it yet.

We are all agreed that having all the facts available is not enough to give people an understanding. We know that that's true on the inflation question, where we've got the facts but not the understanding—the facts but not the truth.

We don't hold an information agency responsible, except for interpreting what the policy is. It isn't the information agency's fault if the policy is itself inadequate.

There isn't enough understanding of what we're fighting for, or of the possible outcome, but we're agreed that the individual citizen and the press and the radio have a duty to make themselves better informed about the war.

## *More on This Topic*


ACKERMAN, CARL W., "Freezing the Press," *Vital Speeches*, November 1, 1942. *Charges that the citizenry has freedom of speech but that the press does not have freedom to speak.*

BROWN, WARREN, "A Negro Warns the Negro Press," *Reader's Digest*, January, 1943. *A criticism of the news policy of the Negro press.*

DAVIS, ELMER, "Why News Is Censored," *United States News*, December 11, 1942. *The Director of War Information gives an outline of the government's basic news policy.*

DRYER, SHERMAN H., *Radio in Wartime*. New York: Greenberg, 1942. *A critical analysis of radio's responsibility in creating an informed public.*

GALE, JOHN, "Government Press Agents," *New Republic*, October 19, 1942. *An analysis of the value of the much-maligned government press agents.*

HIGH, STANLEY, "The Press Fights on Two Fronts," *Reader's Digest*, December, 1942. *Traces the history of the long conflict between the press and the New Deal.*

LAWRENCE, DAVID, "The Tragedy of Secrecy," *United States News*, January 15, 1943. *Argues that World War II "has resulted from a tragedy of secrecy."*

MATTUSCH, KURT R., "Appointment with My Government," *Common Sense*, August, 1942. *Complains not that the government withholds news but that the government does not reach him directly with the news and leaves him the victim of headlines, rumors, and the whims of commentators.*

"The 'Me First' Americans Fight the War in the Grocery Stores," *Life*, January 4, 1943. *An article chiding some of the American people for believing some rationing is not based on actual scarcity.*

"Should the Government Advertise?" *Public Opinion Quarterly*, winter, 1942. *The opinions of five men directly concerned with this perplexing problem.*

STONE, I. F., "F.D.R. and Production," *Nation*, January 16, 1943. *A critical analysis of the President's "State of the Union" speech.*

"This Hush-Hush War," *Christian Century*, October 21, 1942. *An attack on the government's news policy.*

WHITE, WILLIAM ALLEN, "Editors Live and Learn," *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1942. *An analysis of the kind of leadership on foreign policy that the American press gives to the public.*

———, "Unity and American Leadership," *Yale Review*, autumn, 1942.

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## What Do *You* Think?

1. In your opinion, are you as well informed about the important issues as you were before the war? Are the press, radio, and government officials doing as good an informational job as we have the right to expect in wartime?

2. Do you think the government should adopt a policy of giving the news and interpretation of the news directly to the people? Do the people really understand the problem of inflation? Do you agree with Mr. White's recommendation that the President should talk more often and more directly to the people?

3. What news of military operations should be withheld from the American people? When should we deny to the enemy information on the extent of losses we have suffered? Should the complete story of the Pearl Harbor losses have been released earlier?

4. Stuart Chase wrote recently on "What I Don't Know about This War." He said: "I don't know what goes on between Japan and Russia, and so I am unable to put any confidence in a United States offensive from Alaska down through Russian territory. . . . . I don't know whether Australia is really in danger. . . . . I don't know what aid has been sent to the Russians or the Chinese, or what they think of it when they get it. . . . . I don't know whether the Nazis are short of oil or not. . . . . I don't know what the internal state of Europe is, or how many Frenchmen support Laval. . . . . I don't know how many Europeans are supporting Hitler in his crusade against communism, or how many are supporting the Allies and Stalin. Where does Spain stand, and what is the State Department up to in Spain? . . . . I don't know whether the United Nations plan to restore the British, Dutch, and American empires in the Far East, if and when they drive the Japs out of those regions. . . . . I don't know what the

political or military status of India is. . . . . I don't know what Stalin plans for Europe when and if, with our help, he beats the Nazis. . . . . I don't know whether we are fighting to maintain the capitalistic status quo, as the British government seems to advocate, or fighting for the world free market of 1890, as Mr. Hull seems to advocate, or for a new world order consistent with the people's revolution, as Mr. Wallace seems to advocate. . . . . There isn't a layman who knows how the war is really going. . . . . If citizens of a democracy are to come to any intelligent conclusions about their war, they ought to be told a little more about it." Do you think that you know or should know about these things?

# *The People Say....*

*The following letters are representative of the views expressed by the* ROUND TABLE *audience on "1943—Challenge to the Republican Party," broadcast January 10, 1943.*

*

## Encouraged—

. . . . I am much encouraged today as I have felt that the Republican party was going to let me down after having voted for Hoover, Landon, and Willkie. I want to stay with the party but will not go against the program of Sec. Hull, Sumner Welles, and Vice-President Wallace designed to make a real peace.—*A listener from Lewistown, Montana*

*

## What Program?—

The Chicago ROUND TABLE did a noble service today in demanding that the Republican party make some statement of what they stand for aside from just plain negative opposition.

I sincerely hope the public will continue to demand clear and concise answers as to what plan the party has for social security, prosecution of the war, international affairs, and post-war construction.—*A listener from Urbana, Illinois*

*

## Still Isolationist—

. . . . The average man out here still regards the Republican party as the party of isolation, anti-labor, and the tool of the big corporations. Here's hoping they either improve or cease to exist.—*A listener from Ponca City, Oklahoma*

*

## "Helping Hand"—

The discussion today was indeed good and informative. As a member of the Republican party, I endorse Gov. Stassen's views almost in toto. I like his "helping hand" instead of a "handout" philosophy. The best charity is to dispense with the need for charity—thereby saving the dignity of man.—*A listener from Richmond Hill, New York*

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220. *Limiting Wartime Incomes*
221. *Education for Freedom*
222. *The United Nations*
223. *China*
224. *The Near East*
225. *Congress Investigates*
226. *Crisis in Shipping*

No.

227. *Must We Hate Our Enemies?*
228. *War Comes to the Farm*
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230. *Political Reconstruction of the Post-war World*
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234. *Wage Policy in Wartime*
235. *The Rubber Crisis*
236. *Farm Parity*
237. *Congress and the War*
238. *Your Taxes*
239. *The Rediscovery of America*
240. *The Press*
241. *Manpower*
242. *The New Congress*
243. *France*
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246. *After One Year of War—What Have We Learned?*
247. *Italy*
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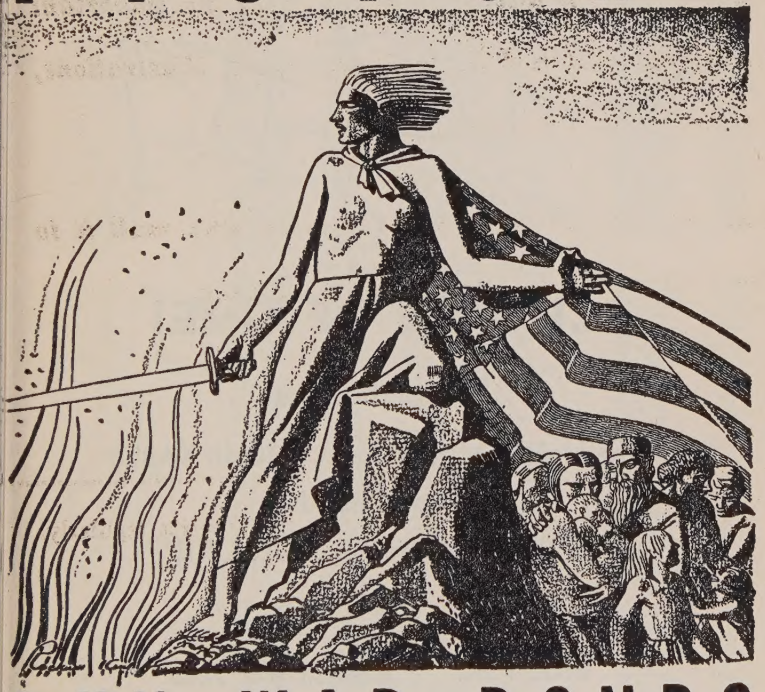

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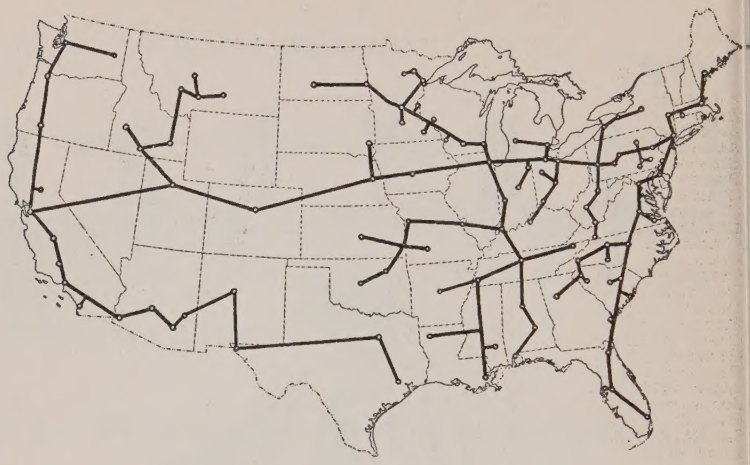

# CHANGE OF TIME!

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*

| | |
|---|---|
| 2:00 P.M. | Eastern War Time |
| 1:00 P.M. | Central War Time |
| 12:00 Noon | Mountain War Time |
| 11:00 A.M. | Pacific War Time |

*

Consult the following page for the ROUND TABLE stations

# These are the NBC network stations that carry the ROUND TABLE at the new time

| City | Call Letters | Kilocycles | City | Call Letters | Kilocycles |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2:00 P.M. EASTERN WAR TIME** | | | | | |
| Allentown, Pa. | WSAN | 1470 | Martinsville, Va. | WMVA | 1450 |
| Altoona, Pa. | WFBG | 1340 | Miami, Fla. | WIOD | 610 |
| Asheville, N.C. | WISE | 1400 | New York, N.Y. | WEAF | 660 |
| Atlanta, Ga. | WSB | 750 | Norfolk, Va. | WTAR | 790 |
| Bluefield, W.Va. | WHIS | 1440 | Philadelphia, Pa. | KYW | 1060 |
| Boston, Mass. | WBZ | 1030 | Pittsburgh, Pa. | KDKA | 1020 |
| Charleston, S.C. | WTMA | 1250 | Portland, Me. | WCSH | 970 |
| Charleston, W.Va. | WGKV | 1490 | Providence, R.I. | WJAR | 920 |
| Charlotte, N.C. | WSOC | 1240 | Reading, Pa. | WEEU | 850 |
| Cincinnati, Ohio | WLW | 700 | Richmond, Va. | WMBG | 1380 |
| Clarksburg, W.Va. | WBLK | 1400 | Rochester, N.Y. | WHAM | 1180 |
| Cleveland, Ohio | WTAM | 1100 | Savannah, Ga. | WSAV | 1340 |
| Columbia, S.C. | WIS | 560 | Springfield, Mass. | WBZA | 1030 |
| Detroit, Mich. | WWJ | 950 | Springfield, Ohio | WIZE | 1340 |
| Florence, S.C. | WOLS | 1230 | Syracuse, N.Y. | WSYR | 570 |
| Grand Rapids, Mich. | WOOD | 1300 | Tampa, Fla. | WFLA | 970 |
| Greenville, S.C. | WFBC | 1330 | Toledo, Ohio | WSPD | 740 |
| Greenwood, S.C. | WCRS | 1450 | Washington, D.C. | WRC | 980 |
| Jacksonville, Fla. | WJAX | 930 | Williamsport, Pa. | WRAK | 1400 |
| Johnstown, Pa. | WJAC | 1400 | Wilmington, Del. | WDEL | 1150 |
| Harrisburg, Pa. | WKBO | 1230 | Winston-Salem, N.C. | WSJS | 600 |
| Lakeland, Fla | WLAK | 1340 | York, Pa. | WORK | 1350 |
| Lima, Ohio | WLOK | 1240 | | | |
| **1:00 P.M. CENTRAL WAR TIME** | | | | | |
| Birmingham, Ala. | WBRC | 960 | Little Rock, Ark. | KARK | 920 |
| Bismarck, N.D. | KFYR | 550 | Louisville, Ky. | WAVE | 970 |
| Chicago, Ill. | WMAQ | 670 | Madison, Wis. | WIBA | 1310 |
| Dallas, Texas | WFAA | 820 | Mankato, Minn. | KYSM | 1230 |
| Des Moines, Iowa | WHO | 1040 | Mobile, Ala. | WALA | 1410 |
| Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis. | WEBC | 1320 | Montgomery, Ala. | WSFA | 1440 |
| | | | Nashville, Tenn. | WSM | 650 |
| Eau Claire, Wis. | WEAU | 1070 | New Orleans, La. | WSMB | 1350 |
| El Paso, Texas | KSTM | 1380 | Oklahoma City, Okla. | WKY | 930 |
| Evansville, Ind. | WGBF | 1280 | Omaha, Neb. | WOW | 590 |
| Fargo, N.D. | WDAY | 970 | Rochester, Minn. | KROC | 1340 |
| Fort Wayne, Ind. | WOWO | 1190 | St. Cloud, Minn. | KFAM | 1450 |
| Hattiesburg, Miss. | WFOR | 1400 | Shreveport, La. | KTBS | 1480 |
| Hibbing, Minn. | WMFG | 1240 | Sioux Falls, S.D. | KSOO | 1140 |
| Houston, Texas | KPRC | 950 | Springfield, Mo. | KGBX | 1260 |
| Indianapolis, Ind. | WIRE | 1430 | Terre Haute, Ind. | WBOW | 1230 |
| Kansas City, Mo. | WDAF | 610 | Tulsa, Okla. | KVOO | 1170 |
| Kingsport, Tenn. | WKPT | 1400 | Virginia, Minn. | WHLB | 1400 |
| La Crosse, Wis. | WKBH | 1410 | Wichita, Kan. | KANS | 1240 |
| **12:00 M. MOUNTAIN WAR TIME** | | | | | |
| Albuquerque, N.M. | KOB | 1030 | Phoenix, Ariz. | KTAR | 620 |
| Billings, Mont. | KGHL | 790 | Pocatello, Ida. | KSEI | 930 |
| Boise, Ida. | KIDO | 1380 | Safford, Ariz. | KGLU | 1450 |
| Bozeman, Mont. | KRBM | 1450 | Salt Lake City, Utah | KDYL | 1320 |
| Butte, Mont. | KGIR | 1370 | Tucson, Ariz. | KVOA | 1290 |
| Denver, Colo. | KOA | 850 | Twin Falls, Ida. | KTFI | 1270 |
| Helena, Mont. | KPFA | 1240 | Yuma, Ariz. | KYUM | 1240 |
| **11:00 A.M. PACIFIC WAR TIME** | | | | | |
| Bakersfield, Cal. | KERN | 1410 | Sacramento, Cal. | KFBK | 1530 |
| Fresno, Cal. | KMJ | 580 | San Diego, Cal. | KFSD | 600 |
| Los Angeles, Cal. | KFI | 640 | Seattle, Wash. | KOMO | 950 |
| Medford, Ore. | KMED | 1440 | Spokane, Wash. | KHQ | 590 |
| Portland, Ore. | KGW | 620 | | | |
| **STATIONS CARRYING ROUND TABLE BY TRANSCRIPTION** | | | | | |
| Buffalo, N.Y. | WBEN | 930 | Raleigh, N.C. | WPTF | 680 |
| Columbus, Ohio | WCOL | 1230 | St. Louis, Mo. | KSD | 550 |
| Memphis, Tenn. | WMC | 790 | San Francisco, Cal. | KPO | 680 |
| Milwaukee, Wis. | WTMJ | 620 | Schenectady, N.Y. | WGY | 810 |
| Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn. | KSTP | 1500 | | | |

# BEHIND THE LABOR CRISIS

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A UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE BROADCAST

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JANUARY 24, 1943

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**LEO CHERNE,** Director, Research Institute of America

**RALEIGH STONE,** School of Business, University of Chicago

**NORMAN THOMAS,** Socialist Candidate for President, 1928, 1932, 1936, 1940

•

## SUGGESTED READINGS

HARD, WILLIAM, "The States Should Umpire the Picket Line," *Reader's Digest*, January, 1943.

"Labor Relations and the War," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November, 1942.

"Management Looks at the Labor Problem," *Business Week*, September 26, 1942.

THOMAS, NORMAN, "How Democratic Are Labor Unions?" *Harper's*, May, 1942.

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